

## LATCHES-LINKS AS VIRTUAL ATTACHMENTS IN DOCUMENTS

### ABSTRACT

A system and method are disclosed for managing target documents referred to by referring documents. A user sends a delete request for a referring document from a user client computer to a master server computer. Next, the master server computer accesses and deletes the referring document, updates a counter for a target document hypertext linked to the referring document, and updates a database, which contained the deleted referring document. The master server computer then determines whether the count for the counter of the target document equals zero. If the counter for the referring document is not equal to zero, the master server computer sends a message to the user indicating that the referring document has been deleted and sends a message to the user asking whether the user wants to delete another referring document. If the user wants to delete another referring document the process goes back to the initial process step, and the user sends another delete request for a referring document. However, if the counter for the referring document equals zero, the master server computer sends a message to the user indicating that the referring document has been deleted and then sends a message to an author of the target document (author client) asking whether the author client wants to delete the target document. Automatic deletion of target documents is also disclosed. Further disclosed are systems and methods for viewing, creating, and providing security for target documents referred to in referring documents.